

# PRESS RELEASE

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## WORKFORCE CENTER AND LOCAL BUSINESSES PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR KATRINA EVACUEES IN DENVER

*Employers are urged to call 720-913-1648 if they have a job opening a Katrina evacuee might fill*

(DENVER) As recovery efforts continue in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, many business owners are eager to provide jobs for the displaced workers. "The Denver Metro Chamber is collecting available job openings from our members for the families staying at Lowry," says Holli Baumunk, Vice President of Economic Development with the Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation "We're committed to offering as much help as we can. We just need to know how we can connect with evacuees looking for work."

That's where Colorado's Workforce Centers come in. These state and county-run employment offices regularly provide that critical link between job seekers and quality employers. "We know that as families arrive in Denver, they will need some time to decompress and acclimate themselves to this extraordinary situation," says Betty Sparrow, Director of Operations for the Denver Workforce Development Office. "But once they're ready, we want to be responsive to their more long-term needs - and, for many of them, that will include a temporary job."

Denver Workforce Development has installed a phone line specifically for employers who have job openings to offer. "It's easy, all they need to do is call 720-913-1648," Sparrow says, "and we'll do the rest. We will notify the evacuees of the available positions and work to connect them with these civic-minded employers."

About 1,000 refugees are expected to come to Colorado over the next few days. With these travelers will come a wide variety of skills for local employers. "It's great to see the public and private sectors coming together to help in this way," says Governor Bill

Owens. "This is a results-oriented effort that will provide critical assistance to hundreds of displaced individuals."